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ABSTRACT

The report describes the design and outcomes of a workplace education program undertaken cooperatively by Northeastern Illinois University, the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers' Union, and a number of local businesses to provide adult basic education, English-as-a-Second-Language, and job skills instruction in the workplace. The report covers the period of May 1993 through March 1995. The first section offers an overview of the program and report. The second gives highlights of program outcomes for the participants, companies, union, and university. Section 3 details four specific program objectives and their accomplishment. A fourth section contains data on program participants, and a fifth describes program activities and features: classes; recruitment; a profile of participants; partner companies; program staff; instructional methodology; teacher selection; staff development efforts; teacher evaluation; instructional materials; and a resource center. In the sixth section, the aspects of the program's implementation model and dissemination activities are outlined, including planning meetings, task analysis, curriculum development, participant recognition, dissemination of promising practices, conference presentations, and media coverage. External and formative program evaluation activities are described in the sixth section. (MSE) (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education)

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ED 391 397

Enhancing Workers' Skills for the Workplace and for Life

Worker Education Program Final Report

May, 1993 -- March, 1995

Presented to:
United States Department of Education
National Workplace Literacy Program

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I. INTRODUCTION

This final program report addresses the outcomes of the Worker Education Program (WEP) which was funded by the U.S. Department of Education's National Workplace Literacy Program from May 1, 1993 to March 31, 1995. The program goals were to provide workplace educational programs for 500 members of the Central States Joint Board of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU) in the Chicago area employed in a variety of manufacturing companies and to prepare limited English proficient workers for the challenges of working in an environment of new technology and increased global competition. These goals were accomplished through an exemplary partnership with the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, participating businesses, and Northeastern Illinois University.

The purpose of this report is: 1) to demonstrate effective program outcomes through successful completion of funded program objectives; 2) to report on the number and characteristics of participants; 3) to report on program activities; 4) to demonstrate the program implementation model for dissemination to other workplace literacy programs; and 5) to report on evaluation activities.

The program model builds on the life and workplace experiences of the workers, recognizing the value of their knowledge and skills in the process of developing literacy skills. The model incorporated some of the latest research in adult education, and is based on several key factors: a) the involvement of all stakeholders in program planning and implementation; b) company and individual assessment to connect learning to future goals; c) program structured to help workers feel ownership; d) job specific, engaging, and culturally relevant customized curriculum; e) the provision of support service needs of workers; f) the identification and dissemination of promising practices; and g) internal and external evaluation to monitor, modify, and evaluate the effectiveness of the model.

The WEP established a strong link between skills taught in the classes and the literacy requirements of actual jobs through an innovative, model program. Because the majority of the workers in the program were limited English proficient and many functioned at a low literacy level, the principle focus of the program was the provision of English skill acquisition through contextualized workplace materials. Also, the program offered a series of workshops focusing on work-related themes.

Four Levels of Program Outcomes

Worker Outcomes

Enhanced many workers' English and communications skills

Enhanced workers' opportunities for promotion and advancement in some companies

Increased many workers' levels of self-confidence

Increased workers' participation in union-related activities

Enhanced workers' job performance

Company Outcomes

Enhanced communication with many workers and the union

Promoted some workers from within company ranks

Increased on-line production at some companies

Enhanced quality control measures at some companies

Worker Education Program

Union Outcomes

Enhanced English communications with union members

Gained many more active union members

Increased number of members using union services

Enhanced communication with management of the companies

University Outcomes

Outreached to non-traditional adult student population

Collaborated with labor union and area businesses

Engendered innovative learner-centered educational methodology

Provided educational services to parents of many children enrolled in Chicago Public Schools

II. HIGHLIGHTS OF PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Participant Accomplishments

- Provided English as a Second Language for the Workplace for 465 workers from participating companies
- Provided a variety of job-related workshops for 251 workers from participating companies
- Increased many workers' levels of self-confidence
- Enhanced many workers' English vocabulary and general communications skills
- Increased many workers' understanding of safety rules and regulations
- Increased participants' oral English skills an average of 5.6 points on the BEST Oral test
- Increased participants' written English proficiency skills an average of 5.2 points on the BEST Literacy test
- Increased participants' writing skills an average of 1.0 points on an holistic writing scale
- Increased participants' math skills an average of 8.7 points on the Math TABE test
- Enhanced workers' opportunities for promotion and advancement in some companies

Company Accomplishments

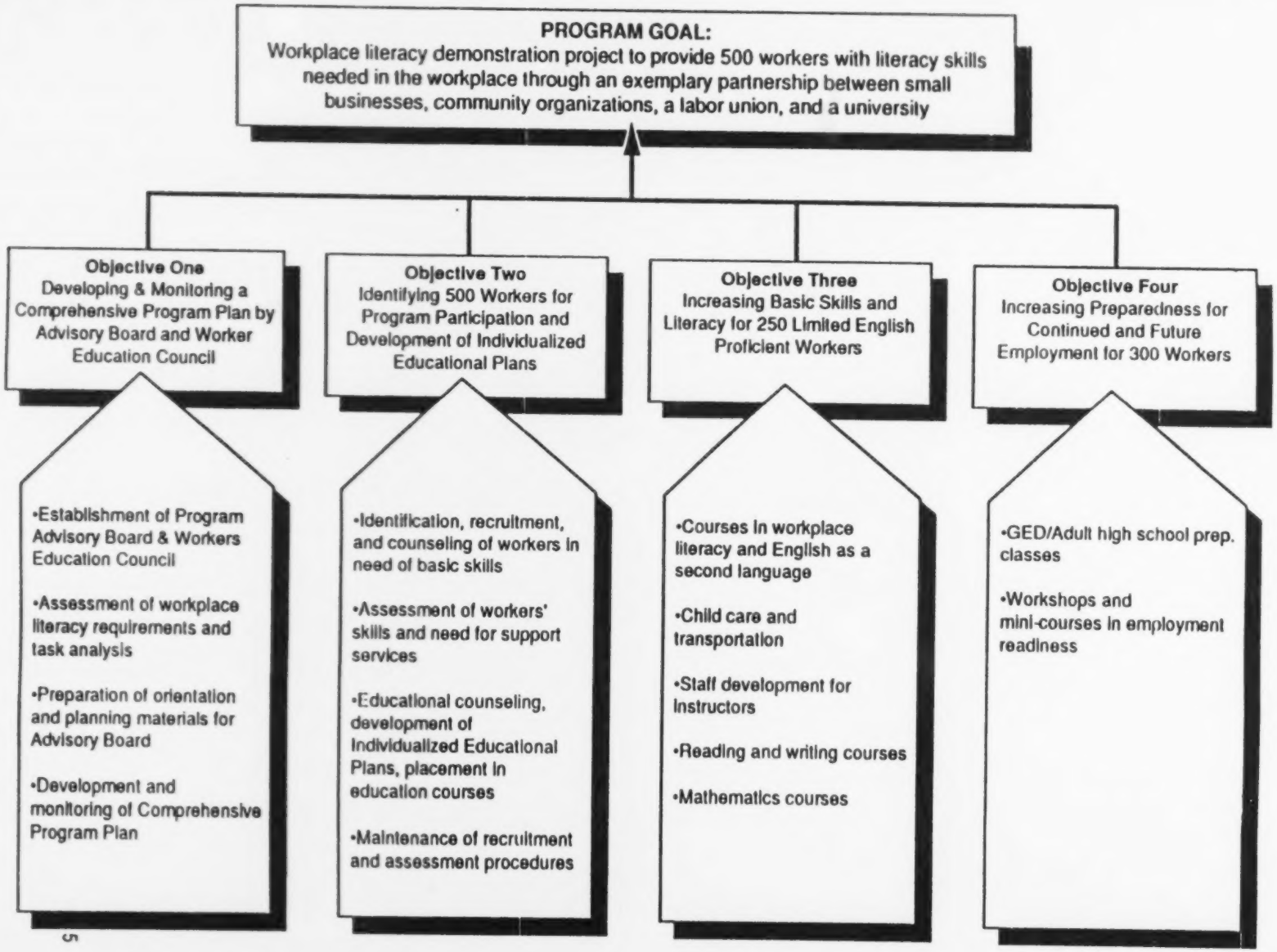
- Promoted workers from within the company ranks at Suncast, Juno Lighting, the Amalgamated Bank of Chicago, Refractory Products, Owens - Corning, and Phoenix Closures
- Enhanced quality control measures in some companies
- Reduced amount of scrap and waste at some companies
- Increased on-line production at some companies
- Enhanced communication with many workers

Union Accomplishments

- Gained many more active union members
- Increased numbers of members participating in contract negotiations
- Enhanced English communications with union members
- Reduced number of frivolous union grievances
- Enhanced communication with management of the companies
- Increased number of members using union services

University Accomplishments

- Engendered innovative learner-centered educational methodology
- Outreached to non-traditional adult student population
- Collaborated with labor union and area businesses
- Provided educational services to parents of many children enrolled in Chicago public schools


PROGRAM GOAL:
Workplace literacy demonstration project to provide 500 workers with literacy skills needed in the workplace through an exemplary partnership between small businesses, community organizations, a labor union, and a university
Objective One
Developing & Monitoring a Comprehensive Program Plan by Advisory Board and Worker Education Council
•Establishment of Program Advisory Board & Workers Education Council
•Assessment of workplace literacy requirements and task analysis
•Preparation of orientation and planning materials for Advisory Board
•Development and monitoring of Comprehensive Program Plan
Objective Two
Identifying 500 Workers for Program Participation and Development of Individualized Educational Plans
•Identification, recruitment, and counseling of workers in need of basic skills
•Assessment of workers' skills and need for support services
•Educational counseling, development of Individualized Educational Plans, placement in education courses
•Maintenance of recruitment and assessment procedures
Objective Three
Increasing Basic Skills and Literacy for 250 Limited English Proficient Workers
•Courses in workplace literacy and English as a second language
•Child care and transportation
•Staff development for instructors
•Reading and writing courses
•Mathematics courses
Objective Four
Increasing Preparedness for Continued and Future Employment for 300 Workers
•GED/Adult high school prep. classes
•Workshops and mini-courses in employment readiness

III. ACCOMPLISHMENT OF PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Objective One

Developing and monitoring a comprehensive program plan through the implementation of an Advisory Board and a Workers' Education Council

Program Objective One was met on a continuous basis. The Advisory Board consisted of representatives from the companies, the union, and the program staff. The Board met formally on a regular basis, made program recommendations, and developed program strategies. Notes of these meetings and attendance records were kept for each meeting. This information is on file at the program office.

Business representative attendance at Advisory Board meetings was erratic. Most company representatives reported that it was very difficult for them to take time off from their busy schedules to come to a meeting at the Union Hall. Also, many company representatives told the program director that because of their own individual and unique training needs, an advisory board consisting of workers, management, union, and program staff at the individual companies would, in fact, be a better type of meeting format.

This idea was embraced wholeheartedly by the Amalgamated Bank of Chicago (ABOC). Thus, Advisory Board meetings consisting of bank workers, management, union, and program staff ensued during the course of the program. This type of Advisory Board proved very effective at the bank as all stakeholders participated in the many levels of program planning and decision-making. The Bank Advisory Board planned courses, recruitment strategies, attendance policies, schedules, and helped develop curricula for the workshops. The ABOC's Advisory Board met on eight occasions, and the general Advisory Board met on four occasions. This testifies to the fact that individual company advisory board meetings were a more effective program practice for the Worker Education Program.

This model of holding individual Advisory Board meetings appealed to the Apparel Group/Enro Company in Louisville, KY. Since the program's inception in Louisville, this was the way Advisory Board meetings were held throughout the duration of the program. At the Apparel Group / Enro Advisory Board meetings, curricula, recruitment, attendance, class offerings, and recognition events were planned by the group which included worker

representatives participating in the program classes, supervisors, upper management, union officials, and educational program staff from Jefferson Community College and the Chicago program office. Similar to the ABOC model, all stakeholders gained from these types of meetings which have become the program model.

Owens-Corning held similar Advisory Board meetings to plan their educational trainings as well. Plans are being made to implement this format at Juno Lighting and Suncast.

The Workers' Education Council meetings were not an effective tool during this grant period. For the most part, workers found it difficult to find common ground because of the diverse training needs in each of the factories. Workers liked the idea of meeting with the stakeholders in their own companies and planning classes based on the unique needs of their co-workers and management. Adult workers have many responsibilities in their lives, therefore, it was difficult for the workers to attend additional meetings after work or on weekends. Due to these schedule conflicts and due to the need for individual companies to meet and discuss their specific training needs, the program developed the previously-mentioned advisory board model which included both workers and management as equal stakeholders in the planning of educational training for workers employed at the partner companies. Through this revised advisory board process, the program developed information for the task analysis process, curricula ideas, training materials, policy development, transportation reimbursement plans, formation of new classes, and recruitment of workers for classes.

Objective Two

> Identifying 500 workers for program participation and development of individualized education plans for participants

This objective was accomplished on an on-going basis. Identification, recruitment, and retention of program participants occurred continually, and new classes formed on the basis of need and interest at individual ACTWU plants. A total of 465 workers participated in ESL for the Workplace, Math, Reading and Writing, and Basic Skills for Maintenance Workers classes. In addition, 251 workers attended workshops focusing on a number of topics including Business Writing, Team Work and Problem Solving, Customer Service, Banking Products, Communications in the Workplace, the Effect of Scrap on Production, and How Workers' Job Performance Impacts Salary, Production, and Company Finances.

The completion of Individual Learning Plans (ILP) was a standardized intake procedure for all students in the classes. The ILP was incorporated into two program forms–the intake form and the progress forms–which facilitators filled out on a monthly basis. These forms listed students' objectives for participating in training and the forms were updated periodically to reflect progress toward students' goals.

Objective Three

> Increasing basic skills and literacy for 250 limited English proficient workers

This objective was implemented on a continuous basis. A sampling of pre- and post-assessment scores demonstrated that participants significantly increased their basic literacy skills. The average gain on the BEST, a standardized ESL test, was 5.6 points, and workers' English writing skills improved by an average of 1.0.

The grant proposed to raise workers' basic math skills through the provision of math classes. A total of seven Math classes were held and students who participated in these classes improved their basic math skills an their average score gain on the Math-TABE was 8.7 points.

The program verified progress toward workers' attainment of basic literacy skills in a number of ways. First of all, workers themselves verbally acknowledged that after attendance in the program they understood their job requirements better; they felt that their on-the-job skills improved; and they were more willing to take risks and attempt to communicate in English and use their newly acquired math skills more often with their supervisors, human resource personnel, co-workers and in their personal lives. Secondly, employers advised program staff of improvements in quality control, less errors and waste, increased communication in English on the shop floor, and a sense that workers seemed to feel better about themselves and the company. This information was verbally transmitted from management personnel to WEP and ACTWU staff, and it was documented on the Company Evaluation of the Worker Education Program.

The program used a combination of standardized tests, custom designed work-based tests, and other open-ended measures of learning gains in order to verify progress toward the previously-mentioned objectives. Tests included the following:

BEST Oral Test

At the time of intake, at mid-points, and upon participants' exit from class, program staff administered the BEST Oral test. The BEST, a well-known ESL instrument, was formulated by the Center for Applied Linguistics and it gives the program a basic idea of students' knowledge of oral English and helps place them in a level appropriate to their needs. The BEST uses real life materials and measures performance of basic language competencies. Participants increased their BEST Oral test score an average of 5.6 points upon the end of the grant cycle.

BEST Literacy Test

If students demonstrated that they could write in English and if they scored highly on the BEST Oral test, many were pre and post tested with the BEST Literacy Test, also created by the Center for Applied Linguistics. The BEST Literacy Test uses real life situations and measures test takers' abilities to fill out forms, write a simple paragraph, and language comprehension. Participants who took this test raised their scores an average of 5.2 points upon termination in the program.

Holistic Writing Assessments

Upon entry into the program, students provided a holistic writing sample based on a custom-made prompt about their work. Since many students could not write in English, they chose to write in Spanish. A sample of holistic writings demonstrated that workers who initially wrote in Spanish on their pre-writing tests wrote in English on the post-test. After completion of classes, the students were post-tested using the same holistic writing prompt, and program data indicated that students who previously wrote in Spanish wrote basic English sentences. Upon taking the post test, the average score rose 1.0.

The Holistic writings samples were given a numbered rating system based on criteria described by Project EXCEL of the National Council of the Raza. Since many of the educational facilitators used the Language Experience Approach in classes, many writing samples were used and evaluated during the course of the project. Narratives from the students also demonstrated the impact of the program on the workers' lives and work performance.

Job-Based Customized Tests

Facilitators, program staff, union representatives, workers, and management of the partner companies assisted in the design of job-related customized tests. These instruments were used as mid-point and post-test measurements in some of the classes. This customized test reflected competencies which were taught in the classes and included work forms, vocabulary, reading and listening comprehension, and in some cases, basic math.

Other indicators of student gains include the following:

Progress Reports

Educational facilitators completed progress reports on their students, and they met with students regularly to discuss achievement of job-related, educational, and personal goals.

Student Portfolios

When possible participants' writing samples were compiled and placed in individual portfolios. This way each student's development was tracked in order to demonstrate progress. Portfolios, by their very nature, demonstrate a series of performance indicators. A student can look through a portfolio and readily see an initial writing sample in which he/she was writing only in Spanish. The student can trace his/her own development as he/she compares the first writing sample with the last in which he/she is writing a full paragraph with correct punctuation and spelling in English. Portfolios capture what standardized tests cannot, and they function as further incentives to continue progressing toward individual goals.

Student Anthology

Student writings were anthologized during the program. The anthology served as an incentive to continue writing, and it was used to demonstrate the effectiveness of the program to students, partner companies, and the union.

Student Evaluations

At different times throughout the program, students filled out evaluations rating the usefulness of the program for ESL, job advancement, personal, and educational purposes. Student feedback was used to make changes in curriculum, materials, staff development, recruitment models, and program methodology.

Simulated Job-Related Tasks

Whenever possible, simulated job related tasks were performed in the classes to gauge the progress of participants. In the Basic Skills for Maintenance Workers class at Juno Lighting, this was done periodically. The workers went out on the shop floor and pointed out actual tasks they performed for the regular maintenance of machines. Workers were tested on the names and parts of their machines on a regular basis and the actual hands-on experience with the machines proved beneficial to workers as their knowledge of machine maintenance increased dramatically upon the termination of the class.

Attendance Records

Attendance records were maintained for every class session by the educational facilitators. At the end of sixteen weeks, the facilitators submitted attendance records to administrative staff. In turn, administrative staff contacted participants who were erratic in their class attendance to facilitate their return to class. During the first few weeks of classes, program staff visited the classes to verify attendance. If registered students failed to attend classes, program staff contacted students and encouraged them to return to classes. Attendance records served many purposes in the evaluation process. They indicated who was attending classes, and provided a plan for continual recruitment and retention.

Objective Four

> Increasing preparedness for continued and future employment of 300 workers

This objective was on-going. Workers increased their preparedness for future employment in a number of ways. Test results showed gains as the direct result of program participation. On an anecdotal level, supervisors commented that workers who regularly attended the classes improved their job skills, demonstrated increased levels of self-esteem and initiative, and communicated in English more frequently to foremen and other

supervisory personnel. Some workers were promoted, and others demonstrated more ease and comfort speaking in English to supervisors and co-workers who did not speak the participants' native languages. According to company representatives, union staff, educational facilitators, and workers themselves, this objective was successfully met in the following ways:

Worker Promotion

The following companies reported promotions of workers who participated in the Worker Education Program:

Company	# of Promotions	Former Position	Position Promoted To
ABOC	2	Customer Service	Credit Underwriter
		Banking Ser. Officer	Ast. VP Bank Ser.
Juno Lighting	4	Assembler	Label Room
		Lead Person	Maintenance
		Assembler	Lead Person
		Shipping I	Shipping II
Owens - Corning	3	Shingle Machinist	Relief Person
		Relief Person	Coater Operator
		Front Relief	Back Relief
Phoenix Closures	2	Process Specialist	Maintenance
		Warehouse Person	Lead Person
Refractory Products	1	Machinist/Inspector	Supervisor
Suncast	8	Trainer	Asst. Foreman
		End of Line Insp.	Trainer
		End of Line Insp.	Trainer
		Fork Lift Operator	Ast. Foreman
		Assembler	Lead Line Person
		Tank Assembler	Quality Intelligence
		Assembler	Quality Intelligence
		Assembler	Trainer
Total Promotions	20		

Participant Case Studies

Marta worked in the Tank Assembly and the Drying Department at Suncast for three years. For over a year, she was in the ESL for the Workplace class with educational facilitator, Susan Womack. When she started classes, Marta did not speak any English, and she only worked in jobs where she could speak Spanish. Because of family responsibilities, she had a hard time enrolling for ESL classes at the local community college. In November, 1994, Marta was promoted to the Quality Intelligence Department. Marta feels that her promotion was a direct result of attending Susan's ESL class. She reports that she feels more confident speaking English, and although she still feels that she understands more English than she can speak, she is even communicating in English with her supervisor.

Nevid has worked at Suncast for seven years. He was promoted to the lead line man in the Molding Department in July, 1994. Prior to that he worked as a small assembler for six and a half years. Nevid began studying English in the Worker Education Program in the Fall of 1993. Having classes available at the worksite gave him the opportunity to attend classes which he was not previously able to do because of his busy schedule. Before he studied English, he only spoke English with his supervisor. Now, he uses English much more frequently. For example, he has meetings every day with the Material Control Department where he has to explain everything that is happening on his line in English. He also has to make labels, plan the production line, and use the computer to check numbers. Outside of work, he now watches television and listens to the radio in English. He also is able to ask questions confidently when he goes shopping.

Other Suncast workers write:

> When I first started in this class I didn't know how to write a composition about what I learned in my class. Now I know how to do that.... Raymundo

> English class helps me very much on my job. Sometimes my supervisor sends me to the clinic with other co-workers. I interpret for them. Now when I want to leave early I can tell my supervisor in English. Sometimes I make an appointment in English. I can understand my children better. Martha

Ninfa worked on the assembly line at Juno Lighting for eleven years. When she heard about the Basic Skills for Maintenance Workers Class, she immediately signed up as taking these classes would qualify her to apply for a position in the Maintenance Department. Ninfa had a negative attitude about her chances of acquiring one of these positions because she is a woman. She felt that the company would only hire men to fix and maintain machinery. Once Ninfa began taking the classes, she did quite well. While her reading, writing and math skills were improving, she learned about different types of tools, nuts, bolts, machine parts, and other work-related concepts. After sixteen weeks in the class, Ninfa improved her skills from "fair" to "good" One week after the class, a job position in the Maintenance Department was posted. Ninfa, along with fifteen other candidates, applied. After a testing and interview process, Ninfa received the job and her salary increased by $.25 per hour. Once on the job, Ninfa took notes and wrote about her job experiences in a journal which she shared with the class facilitator, Sabrina Budasi Martin. She wrote, "I feel better because now I know more about the new job and I have more confidence that I will excel in life. When I go out and fix something, and then go back and write it down, I feel good because I accomplished something new." Eventually, for personal reasons, Ninfa had to leave her position in the Maintenance Department; however, she became a Group Leader and she now oversees a production line, trains co-workers, performs trouble-shooting duties, and communicates with foreman and supervisors on a regular basis. Ninfa attributes her further acquisition of work skills to the Worker Education Program.

Another Juno workers writes:

> I have six months in this class. I like it because I have learned more English .....When I first started the class, I didn't know how to read and write in English. The teacher (Shobha Sharma) helped me. That's why I've improved. I feel good about the classes. Last year my daughter asked me, "Mommy, could you help me with my homework." I told her "I can't because I don't know decimals." The last six months, she asked me the same question, and I helped her because I know decimals now. Fidelina

Workers from the Apparel Group / Enro program classes write:

> English as a Second Language class has helped me speaking English better than before. I now understand when my supervisor tells me what to do. I understand what the American people or co workers tells me what I should do or what I shouldn't. That is making me comfortable in my job.....Tran

> ...I know how to talk and how to pronounce English words and I can talk to American people. In my job I can talk and understand everyone. I am understanding every word when my supervisor explains to me how I can do my job. Nahed

A worker from the ACTWU classes comments:

> I have gone to the class for a long time. I could not speak much English when I started the class. Now, I speak more and it is easier to talk to friends. I can watch t.v. in English. I have learned English in class and I can talk about problems. I understand more. I know how to do my job better in the factory because I can understand more English. Sometimes, it is not easy and I forget. I am old. Suk / Oxxford Clothing

Workers in Math and Pre Algebra classes at Phoenix write:

> This class is a challenge. It makes me think after having been out of school for thirty one years.... Karen

> I think it is a good way to learn something that we already use but didn't know we did. I am doing better than I thought. It is helping me to understand the sizes of bolts and tools I use. I know I can learn faster than I thought I could. Val

Essentially, workers attribute the WEP classes with helping them in all aspects of their lives. The program offers these limited English proficient light manufacturing workers transferability of skills in order to function better at the workplace and in their daily lives. Many workers write about being able to watch television or listen to the radio. The ability to understand mass media is an essential one for immigrants who often feel like they are on the sidelines looking in. Thus, the classes serve a variety of purposes for participants.

Educational Facilitators Program Reflections

Throughout the course of the program, educational facilitators were encouraged to reflect on the program, teaching methodology, and ways in which the program could be strengthened. Facilitators expressed the following comments:

> The program staff are open to new ideas and suggestions. They are always there when we need advice about something. Through workshops and sharing sessions the teachers have learned more about workplace teaching methods. We have devised more appropriate ways of assessing students. We have worked hard together to develop new materials which may benefit future workplace programs. Susan Womack / Educational Facilitator: Suncast

It is important to realize that as a teacher you're always learning! Every time I go to a teachers meeting, I find I am receiving so much information to optimize my teaching style in the form of books, workshops and also suggestions from other teachers. This particular job has been an invaluable source for teaching in the workplace. The yearly conferences and workshops at other sites have always added to my file of ideas to apply in a classroom situation. Above all, I am always learning from my students about what is important for them to learn to interact more efficiently at work. Shobha Sharma / Educational Facilitator: Juno Lighting

Company Evaluations of the Worker Education Program

During the program cycle, employers from seven companies filled out program evaluations documenting competencies gained by the workers. This data demonstrated accomplishment of program goals and objectives. The checklists included questions on indicators of workplace education program quality.

The evaluations measured the following work competencies:

Employee Performance	Reading & Writing Abilities
Safety Improvements	English Communication
Worker Productivity	Math & Computation Skills
Worker Promotions	Teamwork & Participation Skills

The results of the evaluations completed by workers' supervisors demonstrate that workers spoke English more frequently on the job and that job performance and skills improved through workers' participation in the program. The seven companies participating in the evaluation process were: the Amalgamated Bank of Chicago, Apparel Group / Enro, Juno Lighting, Owens-Corning, Phoenix Closures, Suncast Incorporated, and Refractory Products. The graphic on page 17 illuminates the supervisors' responses on the checklist.

COMPANY EVALUATION OF THE WORKER EDUCATION PROGRAM

Of the 7 companies surveyed, all reported that workers' on-the-job performance has improved since the implementation of Worker Education Program classes.

6 out of 7 companies reported that:

- errors and waste have decreased.
- product quality control has improved.
- workers' self-confidence has noticeably increased.
- workers have been promoted.
- communication problems have decreased.
- workers' writing skills have improved.
- workers' reading and comprehension skills have improved.
- workers are performing teamwork tasks in an enhanced manner.

5 out of 7 companies reported that:

- on-line production has increased.
- workers are speaking English more often to supervisors.
- workers' computation and measurement skills have improved.

4 out of 7 companies reported that on-the-job accidents and injuries have decreased.

2 companies reported a decrease in worker absenteeism, while 4 companies said that absenteeism had never been a problem.

■ 17

Union Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Worker Education Program

The union also had the opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. Union staff representatives from Chicago and Louisville evaluated the program. Union evaluation mechanisms included questions about the following items:

Enhanced Union Members' English Communication Skills	Increased Union Members' Self-Esteem & Confidence
Increased Members' Union Involvement	Better Communication with Supervisors & Other Management
Better Understanding of Union Grievance Procedures	Increased Promotions of Rank and File Union Members
Curriculum is Relevant to Union Members' Needs	Enhanced Union Members' Employment Security

The general consensus was that a number of workers were promoted after taking classes through the program, more workers were taking advantage of other union services including the health center and social services, less frivolous grievances were being filed, and workers were participating more frequently in union activities such as contract negotiations, organizing drives, and in local activities. The graphic on page 19 illuminates the union's responses to the program evaluation.

UNION EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE WORKER EDUCATION PROGRAM

Of the 2 ACTWU regional areas (Chicago, IL and Louisville, KY) both said that union members' basic skills and union participation increased.

Union representatives in both regions reported that the Worker Education Program impacted union members in the following ways:

- increased knowledge of union benefits
- increased understanding of grievance procedures
- increased awareness of health and safety issues at the workplace
- assisted union members' employment security
- conducted union meetings in English more often
- assisted union in reaching out to new members
- improved teamwork skills among co-workers

Union representatives in both regions reported that the Worker Education Program impacted workers in the following ways:

- enhanced oral English skills
- enhanced written English skills
- increased self-esteem
- increased basic skills
- improved relations with co-workers
- improved communication with supervisors
- improved problem-solving skills
- enhanced positive attitude at work
- increased interest to apply for new job opportunities and promotions

Union representatives in Chicago, IL reported the following overall outcomes of the Worker Education Program for union members:

- improved attendance at union sponsored events
- increased involvement in contract negotiation committees
- increased job advancement opportunities at some workplaces

IV. NUMBERS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

1.	Proposed target number of participants to be served:	500
2.	Actual number of participants served:	716
3.	Federal Funds Allocated:	$508,365.00
4.	Federal Funds Used:	$507,858.00
5.	In-Kind Matching Funds Projected:	$530,996.00
6.	In-Kind Matching Funds Used:	$532,020.11
7.	Participants in Long Term Classes:	465
8.	Participants in Short Term Workshops:	251

9. Long Term Classes Offered:
   - 22 ESL for the Workplace Classes
   - 1 Basic Skills (Reading, Writing, & Math) Class
   - 7 Basic Workplace Math Classes
   - 1 Pre-Algebra Class
   - 3 Reading/Writing for the Workplace Classes
   - 1 Basic Skills for Maintenance Workers Class

10. Short Term Workshops Offered:

	Total # in Workshops**
Business Writing (ABOC)	30
Teamwork/Problem-Solving (ABOC)	28
Customer Service (ABOC)	40
Understanding Banking Products and Services (ABOC)	30
Communications at the Workplace	164
The Effect of Scrap on Production (Refractory)	31
How Workers' Job Performance Impacts Salary, Production, and Company Finances (Refractory)	61

** Note: Many students attended more than one workshop. The unduplicated total of students attending workshops is 251.

11. Partner Companies in Long Term Classes

Company (* = partner)	# Served	Products
ACTWU	3	Labor union
Down River Products	7	Corrugated shipping products
Apparel Group / Enro	67	Men's dress shirts & neckwear

Company (* = partner)	# Served	Products
Hartmarx	5	Men's suits
Juno Lighting	71	Recessed track lighting
Libra Glove	17	Launder protective gloves
Owens-Corning	39	Roofing products
Oxxford Clothes	8	Women's suits
Party Shoes	29	Ballet shoes
Phoenix Closures	44	Bottle caps
Roman Adhesives	6	Wallpaper adhesive
Suncast Corporation	169	Plastic injected mold lawn ware
Total # in long term classes	465	

12.

Partner Companies in Workshops	# Served	Products
ACTWU	34	Labor union
Amalgamated Bank	53	Full service state chartered bank
American Guard-It*	5	Garment bags
Baskin	1	Men's clothing
Chicago Transparent Products	2	Plastic bags
Custom Plastics	4	Plastic injected molding
Fashionaire	1	Flight attendant apparel
Hartmarx	28	Men's suits
Juno Lighting	40	Recessed track lighting
Libra	2	Launder protective gloves
Midway Cap	1	Uniform hats
Oxxford	17	Women's suits
Party Shoes	1	Ballet shoes
Refractory Products	34	Ceramic vacuum-formed product
Riddell	1	Football equipment
Suncast	3	Plastic injected mold lawn ware
Xerox*	24	Remanufacture Xerox equipment

* Indicates that plant closed during the course of the program.

13. Participant Data:

a. Native countries of participants in long term classes:

Belarus	1	Iraq	1
Bosnia	1	Korea	17
Cambodia	2	Laos	1
China	15	Mexico	327
Colombia	2	Nicaragua	1
Dominican Republic	1	Peru	4

Ecuador	1	Philippines	1
Egypt	1	Poland	1
El Salvador	1	Puerto Rico	5
Guatemala	11	Russia	2
Hong Kong	2	U.S.	26
India	6	Vietnam	33

b. Native countries of participants in workshops:

Canada	1	Italy	3
China	7	Mexico	60
Colombia	3	Nicaragua	1
Ecuador	3	Philippines	2
El Salvador	3	Poland	9
Germany	1	Puerto Rico	5
Guatemala	5	United Kingdom	1
Haiti	2	United States	139
Hong Kong	2	Vietnam	1
		Yugoslavia	3

c. Ethnic Group in Classes:

African American	9
Asian	77
Latino	368
White	11

d. Ethnic Group in Workshops:

African American	72
Asian	11
Latino	81
White	87

e. Average years of school in native countries:

Classes:		Workshops:	
Range:	1 -- 17	Range:	1- 18
Average:	8 years	Average:	10 years

f. Age:

Classes:		Workshops:	
Range:	18 -- 72	Range:	18 -76
Average:	35	Average:	42

g. Gender:

Classes:		Workshops:	
Women:	266	Women:	164
Men:	199	Men:	87

h. Previous ESL study:

Range: 1 month — 6 years
Number of participants with previous ESL study: 153

i.

Attendance hours for classes	16,266
Average attendance hours per student	35
Attendance hours for workshops	3,427.5
Average attendance hours per student	7.1

V. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Classes

The program offered ESL for the Workplace, Reading and Writing, Math for the Workplace, Pre Algebra, Basic Skills for Maintenance Workers and a wide array of workshops including Team-Building and Problem Solving, Communications at the Workplace, Business Writing, the Effects of Scrap on Production, and How Workers' Job Performance Impacts Salary, Production, and Company Finances. Classes and workshops were held at were held at the participating plants and at ACTWU headquarters.

Workers attended class on a partial release time basis at Enro, Owens-Corning, Phoenix, and Suncast Corporation. The Amalgamated Bank of Chicago and Refractory Products paid workers on a full time release basis to attend workshops. Workers attended classes on a voluntary basis at Down River, Juno Lighting, Libra Glove, Party Shoes, and Roman Adhesives, and workers from the other participating plants attended classes or workshops on a volunteer / non-paid basis at the union headquarters.

Recruitment

Recruitment of workers occurred prior to the start-up of classes and workshops at the worksites and the union headquarters. WEP staff and union business agents distributed flyers announcing the program to all workers. The flyers were printed in Spanish when necessary. Staff went to the participating plants at lunch time, during breaks, and for meetings planned by the union and the company. At these sessions, staff described the types of classes and supplemental services offered by the program such as child care and transportation stipends; allayed fears about going back to school; and assured workers that tests and other assessment of progress was confidential and that participation in the program regardless of an individual's progress, would not jeopardize their job security.

Profile of Participants

As the data indicates, the majority of participants in the Worker Education Program classes were limited English proficient adults primarily from Mexico and other Latin American countries with an average of eight years of formal education in their native

countries. Many participants never attended formal schooling in their native countries, and some were non-literate in their native language. The majority of the workers never completed high school.

With the addition of workers at Enro in Louisville, KY, the program began serving a variety of limited English proficient workers from Asian countries including Vietnam and Korea.

Many workers never attended adult education courses prior to attendance in the WEP classes, and the majority who attended classes reported that they dropped out of the ESL programs due to the large class size, lack of individual attention, their inability to read and write in their native language, the lack of adequate support services, and personal problems.

The WEP attempted to eradicate these problems by implementing the following practices:

1) **limiting class size to 15 students;**
2) **using teacher aides;**
3) **incorporating Individual Educational Plans;**
4) **offering child care services at the union hall;**
5) **providing transportation stipends to all workers who drove or took public transportation to classes; and**
6) **providing a child care stipend to participants who attended classes after work at the factories.**

On an anecdotal level, many students reported negative schooling experiences. They felt that they were either "too old" or "not smart enough" to learn. This lack of participants' self-esteem was a factor that the program attempted to deal with through classroom discussion and a learner-centered methodology leading to a sense of program ownership.

The program offered partial transportation stipends to students who drove or took public transportation to classes. Transportation reimbursement aided many students who were previously deterred from attending ESL classes. Most of the workers were low-salaried assembly line workers with families. Their budgets were restricted to the basics: housing, food, and maintenance of their children. Transportation assistance in any form was welcomed. The workers were primarily assembly line workers earning salaries between $3.85 and $12.00 per hour.

In the workshops, union members from a variety of companies participated in the program. Many African Americans and Whites attended these classes. These workers were not in need of long term classes, but they were very interested in brushing up on basic communications skills for the workplace using personal computers. Workers in these workshops upgraded their writing skills for filling out report forms, improved document reading skills for charts and graphs, upgraded math skills for tallying of production sheets and for formulating statistical reports, and expanded vocabulary and spelling to read work-related forms and documents.

Partner Companies

Along with ACTWU, six companies signed on as partners. These companies were: Chicago Transparent Products, Henri Studio, Juno Lighting, Midway Cap, Riddell, and Suncast Corporation. Five other companies were named as participating sites on the original grant application: American Guard-It, Custom Plastics, Grand Illusion Design, Libra Industries, and Party Shoes.

Some of the original companies who signed on as partners were ultimately unable to participate in the program for many reasons. Henri Studio was unable to allow workers to participate in classes during company time, and workers were unable to attend classes before or after work as most of the workers lived a far distance from the company and commuted via van pools to and from work. Chicago Transparent Products offered classes under the previous Workplace Literacy Grant, and due to a busy production schedule felt that their workers would not be able to participate in the program during this grant cycle. Likewise, Riddell's busy production schedule and management personnel changes made it impossible for the company to participate in the program. Midway Cap wanted to offer ESL classes to workers after work on a purely volunteer basis, however, workers opted not to stay after work due to their commitments at home and to family.

Since our primary partner is ACTWU, the program was able to provide workplace literacy services to other companies employing ACTWU represented workers as long as funds were available and partner companies were not inconvenienced. These companies include the Amalgamated Bank of Chicago, the Apparel Group / Enro in Louisville, KY, Owens-Corning, Phoenix Closures, Refractory Products, and Roman Adhesives. These additional companies proved to very interested in educating their workers for present job stabilization and future growth. In addition, these companies were interested in participating

in the program as full stakeholders and many company representatives became very involved in the Advisory Board process.

Program Staff

In addition to program director, Margaret Boyter-Escalona, the program employed Susan Keresztes-Nagy as the Training Coordinator from May, 1993 until September, 1995; Paula Garcia as the Program Coordinator from May, 1993 until September, 1993, and from February, 1995 until March, 1995; Sarah Moran as the Assistant Director from January 1994 until March , 1995; and Sabrina Budasi Martin, Training Coordinator, from October, 1994 until March , 1995; fifteen educational facilitators; and five teacher aides.

In addition, the program contracted with Jefferson Community College (JCC) in Louisville, KY and eight educational facilitators taught the classes at the Apparel Group / Enro under the auspices of JCC. JCC administrative staff consisted of the Business and Industry Liaison, Mary Ann Hyland-Murr, and the Program Coordinator, Donna Hill.

The program contracted with a number of individuals who assisted in curriculum development and teaching classes or workshops. Additionally, the program contracted with the Center for Workforce Education (CWE), a division of Laubach Literacy International. The Center staff headed by Eric Gershenson and Caren Van Slyke, created and developed innovative curriculum materials for the workshops at the Amalgamated Bank of Chicago. The CWE staff played a crucial role in the ABOC's Advisory Board and the project was very successful due to a strong collaborative effort from all stakeholders -- bank workers and management, program staff under the direction of Assistant Director: Sarah Moran, the educational facilitator, the union business agent, and the chief steward at the bank.

All program staff had many years of teaching and administrative experience in Adult Education programs for limited English proficient adults. Most of the staff possess Master's Degrees in English as a Second Language, Adult Education, English, or other related disciplines.

Educational Methodology

Facilitators used an eclectic (Haskel,1978) ESL methodology from Krashen's Listening Comprehension, to Lado and Finocchiarro's Audiovisual Method, to Asher's Total Physical Response, to the Language Experience Approach. Central to this eclectic methodology was the student-centered (Anore, 1989) or worker-centered (Freire, Shor) approach.

In a worker-centered approach workers are active agents in the educational process of attaining workplace literacy skills, and workers are involved in all aspects of the program -- from the classroom to the Advisory Board, from the curriculum development to program planning. This kind of ownership placed students at the center of their own education, honed their decision-making skills, and built self-confidence, thereby enabling them to attain workplace competencies and participate more fully in their workplaces and their communities.

According to Madsen Gugliemino "for students and teachers to succeed, ESL students must work with materials relevant to their immediate language needs." (1991) For this reason, teachers used the context of the workplace to promote students' language acquisition. Then students applied this language context to the workplace and beyond.

Because the majority of workers needed English skills in all aspects of their lives, the focus in classes was on the transferability of skills. Students needed to know how to articulate body parts, colors, and numbers not only to report accidents on the job, identify a product label, or to calibrate a machine, but to tell the doctor where it hurts, give a child a crayon, or turn on the oven to the appropriate temperature.

In her *Adult ESL Sourcebook,* Madsen Gugliemino recommends the following steps to effective ESL classes:

1) **A student-teacher relationship based on mutual respect.**
2) **Involvement in the classroom.**
3) **Relevant instruction.**
4) **A climate of teacher warmth and empathy.**
5) **Opportunities for problem-solving and self-directed learning.**
6) **Opportunities for success.**
7) **A comfortable, yet stimulating environment.**
8) **Cultural orientation. (1991)**

The WEP program successfully incorporated these steps into the educational methodology and the teacher-training aspects of the program.

The programs worker-centered philosophy focused on the complex issues confronting limited English proficient workers in the U.S. In the classes and workshops, adult workers reflected on the contextual aspects of their workplaces and personal experiences to assist them in learning how to learn, how to facilitate better communication at the workplace, how to work as a team, and how to build on present skills for future job stability and promotion.

Facilitators were encouraged to use a problem-posing (Freire, Wallerstein, and Auerbach) approach for developing critical thinking skills. This approach begins by listening for workers' issues or critical incidents. Based on this listening, facilitators select and present the familiar situations back to students in a codified form: a photograph, a written dialogue, a story, or a drawing. Teachers then use a series of inductive questions which move the discussion of the situation from the concrete to a more analytical level. The problem-posing process directs workers to name a problem or a situation , understand how it applies to them and their workplaces, determine the causes of the problem, and suggest alternatives of solutions to the problem. This process was helpful in situations at work like overtime, lay-offs, understanding w-2s, and Total Quality Management initiatives.

Workers also discussed their importance in the production of goods for market distribution and issues in the American work culture including the importance of being on-time for work, appropriate reasons for calling in sick, the particulars of the W-2 form, and reasons for certain health and safety rules. These competencies were ones which were identified both by workers and management at the partner companies. In *Exemplary Practices in ESL Literacy Programs,* Spruck Wrigley attests to the need of focusing on learners' articulated needs:

> Successful ESL literacy programs have one thing in common: they have found ways of helping learners to access literacy and use it in ways that are meaningful to them. In focusing on meaning and communication and by allowing grammar and phonics to be used as tools, not as ends in themselves, these programs are leading the way toward a learner-focused teaching for adults who are new to literacy and new to English. (1992)

WEP classes were successful because they incorporated workers' self-identified ESL and workplace needs into the program on a daily basis.

Educational Facilitator Selection

The Worker Education Program staff formulated an exemplary process of educational facilitator selection and training. Most prospective educational facilitator candidates taught EFL abroad, ESL in a TOEFL preparation program, or ESL in a local community college. Although very skilled and learned, these teachers often lacked the skills to teach literacy-level ESL learners. Many of these educators also adhered to a grammar methodology which

is not effective with students who have no grammar base in their native language. Further, many ESL teachers had no exposure or limited exposure to a factory environment.

The program found that teachers needed more familiarity with the work environment of their students, so the program initiated factory tours and meetings with plant supervisors when possible. In addition, ACTWU business agents met frequently with teachers. The program involved teachers in the task analysis process when possible, and educators attended internal and external workplace training's.

The WEP formulated another innovative practice in the selection of educational facilitators. In its initial interviews with prospective teachers, candidates were asked to teach a sample fifteen minute class to the administrative team. In this way, the WEP staff evaluated whether or not the candidate was able to make the transition from the traditional ESL classroom to ESL for the Workplace in a factory setting. Through the sample lesson, the administrative team was better able to predict a teacher's potential to adapt to a workplace environment. This process demonstrated the teacher's ability to be student-centered, interactive, and use a variety of ESL methodologies. With the addition of the sample lesson in the interview process, the program achieved better results in hiring and retaining the best educational facilitators.

Staff Development

In order to ensure quality education, facilitators were trained and evaluated by the administrative program staff. The evaluation process helped the facilitators to improve, develop, and adapt their teaching skills for a workplace literacy program. The training coordinator worked with facilitators on a one-to-one basis to further develop teachers' skills and adapt methodology for ESL for the Workplace instruction.

The program held monthly meetings for facilitators during which facilitators shared materials and ideas for improving teaching techniques. The program staff provided in-service training at the meetings. Agendas and notes of these meetings are on file in the program office.

In-service training included seminars on the following topics:

- Language Experience Approach and Writing
- Classroom Management
- Objectives, Testing, and Documenting Student Progress
- Student Assessment
- Adapting Authentic Materials for the Workplace
- Strategies for Teaching Math and Problem-solving in the Workplace
- Workplace Teaching Materials Swap Shop for Educational Facilitators

Program staff also attended local ESL, Workplace Education, and Adult Education conferences. Facilitators attended interactive educational workshops hosted by the Adult Learning Resource Center. The Coordinators attended regular meetings of the Workplace Education Providers Discussion Group sponsored by the Adult Learning Resource Center, and disseminated information from these sessions to the facilitators.

In order to improve their skills and knowledge of the workplace literacy field, administrators and facilitators attended the Illinois TESOL Conference, the Adult Education Service Center of Northern Illinois Conference, and the Illinois Resource Center's Workforce Education Conference. Additionally, the Assistant Director, Sarah Moran, and Program Coordinator, Sabrina Budasi Martin, attended the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education Conference in Nashville, TN in November, 1994 and the International TESOL Conference in Long Beach, CA in March, 1995. Both Sarah and Sabrina met with educational facilitators and aides to share training ideas gained from these conferences.

With the addition of the Apparel Group / Enro program, administrative staff traveled to Louisville on a regular basis in order to train ESL for the Workplace facilitators on the WEP program methodology, administrative paperwork, and the use of Workplace ESL activities. The program staff also assisted in the performance of the task analysis, and provided guidance and direction in the development of curricula for the Apparel Group / Enro class.

Educational Facilitator Evaluation

WEP Program coordinators observed educational facilitators regularly and provided feedback to develop facilitators' skills and adapt practices for the workplace. The WEP designed an Observation Checklist which both the administrative staff member and the facilitator completed. The Checklist was a tool which helped facilitators reflect on and improve methodology and teaching practice. Also, educational facilitators were encouraged to perform peer observations in order to learn, collaborate and share teaching styles, methods, and activities with other facilitators.

Learning Materials

In order to assist participants, a variety of educational resources and materials were used throughout the program cycle. Educational facilitators created their own materials from work related forms and documents collected during the task analysis process. Further, they used realia such as safety signs, work tools, jazz chants for the workplace, games, forms, time cards, paycheck stubs, training manuals, and employee handbooks. Educators also used a variety of books, videos, and audio cassettes to augment learners' acquisition of English and Math.

Classes used the following Workplace ESL texts:

ESL Literacy, Longman
Working in English, Books 1 and 2, Contemporary Books
Day by Day, Prentice Hall
Speaking Up at Work, International Institute of Minnesota
ESL for Action, Addison- Wesley
Reading Skills that Work, Contemporary Books
Communication Skills that Work, Books 1 and 2, Contemporary Books

Reading & Writing classes used:

The Writing Experience Book 1, 2, & 3, New Readers' Press

Math classes used the following texts:

Math Skills that Work, Contemporary Books
Business and Consumer Mathematics, Irwin Inc.

Pre-Algebra classes used the following series:

Breakthrough to Math Series, New Readers' Press
Signed Numbers and *Solving Equation*, New Readers' Press

Resource Center

The program developed a resource center which is housed at the ACTWU office and teachers borrowed materials and books from the resource center on a regular basis.

During the course of the grant period, ACTWU donated ten personal IBM computers and two printers to the program. The computers were equipped with ESL, GED, and basic skills software to provide students the opportunity to enhance their education with computer-assisted learning. Participants in the Communications for the Workplace workshop used these computers as part of the course. The Computer Laboratory will be available for students to use on a sign-up basis in the future grant period.

VI. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION MODEL AND DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES

Program Implementation Model

The Worker Education Program provided members of ACTWU employed in various light manufacturing factories with job-related English as a Second Language and Adult Basic Education skills enhancement through two program models: provision of long-term classes and short-term workshops. Classes were developed after a process incorporating meetings with program partners and participants, needs assessment, task analysis at the job sites, the creation of exemplary curricula, and the implementation of classes. The graphic on page 35 depicts the program model for establishing workplace literacy classes in the participating companies. Through this process the program established a strong link between skills taught in the classes and literacy requirements of actual jobs.

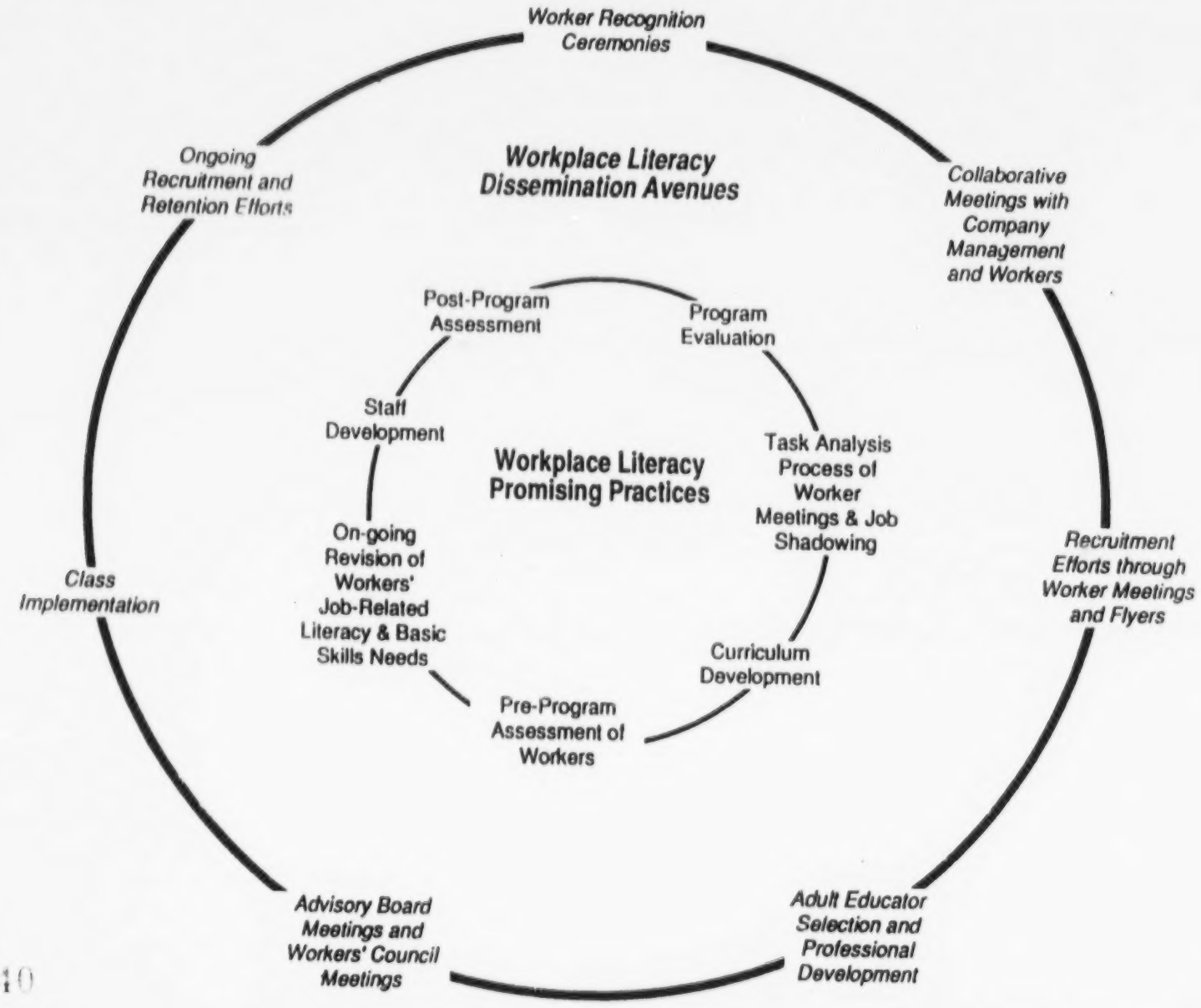
Planning Meetings with Management and Participants

The first step in implementing the Worker Education Program in companies was to present the program to the management of the companies. Typically, the program director, the business agent, and the educational director of ACTWU met with the human resource development staff person at the company or other appropriate company representative. The purpose of these meetings was to introduce the program to the companies and to begin the collaborative process of providing workplace education training to workers employed in the companies. Company representatives advised the program staff of training needs, problem areas, trends in technology, and industry competition which should be included in curricular offerings. Management also filled out a survey of company training needs and commitment.

After meetings with the company management, the next step was to present the program to the workers. In some cases, the program staff first met with union stewards and then the stewards convened meetings with the workers to explain the program, gain support from the workers, and begin an informal needs assessment process focusing on workers' training and educational needs.

This process of involving all stakeholders in the educational planning of the program was instrumental in the success of the program. In order for the program to have an impact on the workers' lives and the profit margins of individual companies, the workers were consulted from the very start.

Program Implementation Model


Worker Recognition Ceremonies
Collaborative Meetings with Company Management and Workers
Recruitment Efforts through Worker Meetings and Flyers
Adult Educator Selection and Professional Development
Advisory Board Meetings and Workers' Council Meetings
Class Implementation
Ongoing Recruitment and Retention Efforts
Workplace Literacy Dissemination Avenues
Post-Program Assessment
Program Evaluation
Staff Development
Task Analysis Process of Worker Meetings & Job Shadowing
Workplace Literacy Promising Practices
On-going Revision of Workers' Job-Related Literacy & Basic Skills Needs
Curriculum Development
Pre-Program Assessment of Workers

Task Analysis

Once management and workers provided input for the implementation of program classes, the task analysis stage began. The task analysis process was conducted by the program staff, Susan Keresztes-Nagy, Sarah Moran, and Sabrina Budasi Martin. In addition, educational facilitators, Susan Womack, assisted in the task analysis process at Suncast, Ildi Revi, assisted in the task analysis process at Owens-Corning and Phoenix Closures, and Shobha Sharma assisted in the creation of task analysis at Juno Lighting.

The task analysis process documented the observed skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing English and observed skills in problem-solving, computing, team-building, and vocabulary of each job of workers involved in the project. In addition, the task analysis included information regarding the clothing, tools, equipment, and machinery needed to perform the specific jobs. The task analysis also focused on health and safety issues as well as problems and mistakes which occurred commonly on the job. This procedure also involved interviewing workers, co-workers, foremen, supervisors, and management. The task analysis process also included questions about new technology, workplace reorganization, and language and literacy skills which are essential to effective job performance. The task analysis process required extensive observation and job shadowing of all workers who could potentially benefit from the educational training.

Curriculum Development

Custom-designed curriculum guides were developed after the task analysis. Since most of the workers had the same ESL needs, the general ESL curriculum was created and divided into thematic units focusing on the following:

- Work Issues: Communications in the Workplace
- Health and Safety
- Quality Control
- Work Forms
- Company Rules
- Vocabulary and Expressions Used on-the-Job

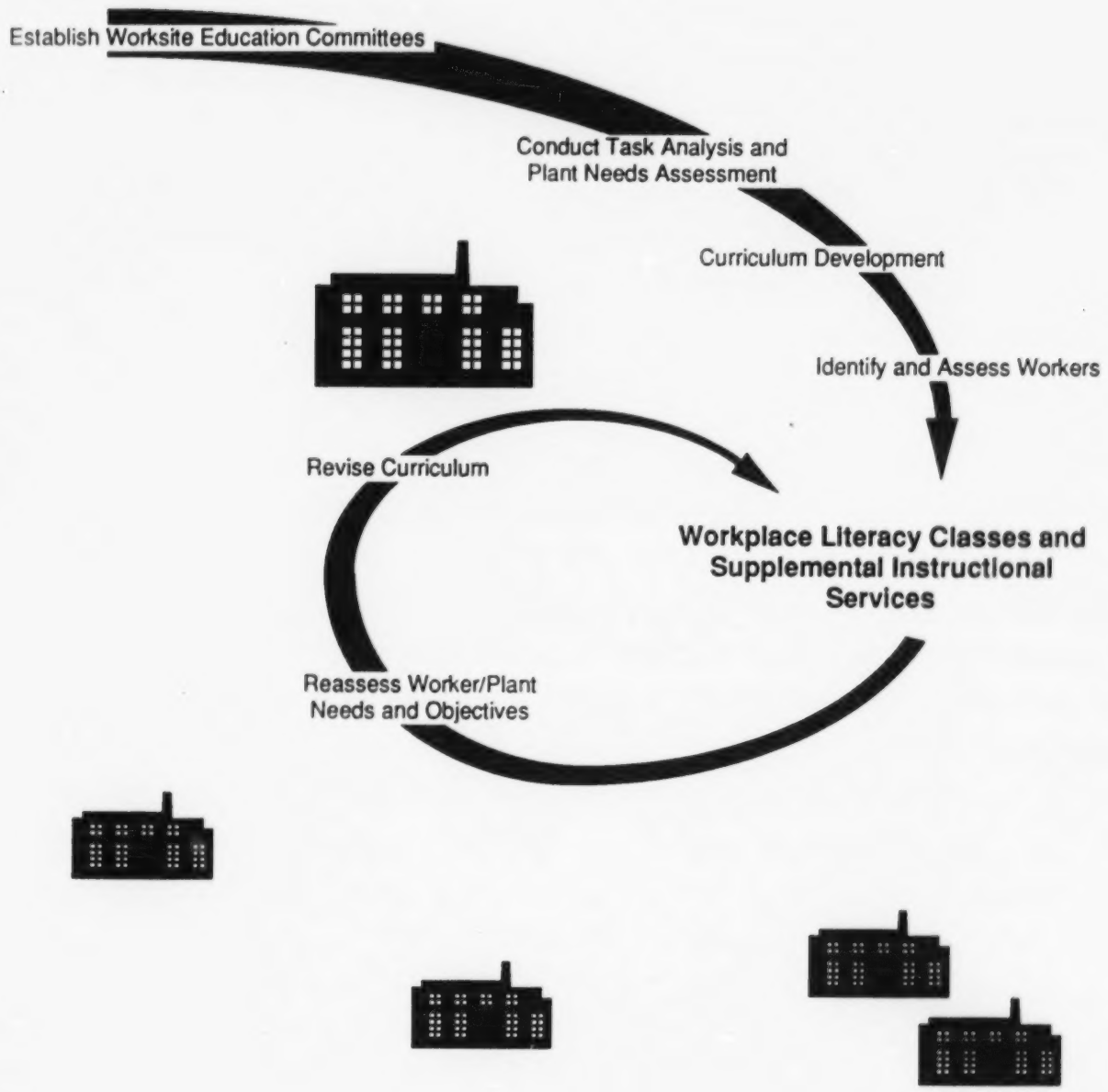
Each unit listed an objective, appropriate language skills, lesson ideas, activities, and materials which could be used to teach the lesson. Each participating factory used the same

themes, but the objectives listed under each theme differed. The curriculum materials were designed for adults to reflect the demands of the workplace and the needs and interests of adult students.

In addition, specific curriculum guides were created for Suncast, Phoenix, and Owens-Corning after a thorough task analysis process. An exemplary curriculum guide was created by Sabrina Budasi Martin for the Basic Skills for Maintenance Workers at Juno Lighting.

For workshops, staff and educational facilitators created specific curriculum for individual partner companies. For example, Dr. Pete Stonebreaker, a Professor in the College of Business and Management at Northeastern created a class for Refractory Products which revolved around the importance of lessening scrap at the workplace. The program contracted with the Center for Workforce Education (CWE), a division of Laubach Literacy International, to develop curriculum for the workshops at the Amalgamated Bank of Chicago. The CWE created curricula for Business Writing, Banking Products and Services, Teamwork and Problem-solving, and the Basics of Customer Service. Paula Garcia developed the curriculum guide for the Communications at the Workplace workshop which proved to extremely popular as it taught basics of reading, writing, and math at the workplace using personal computers donated to the program by ACTWU. Professor Stonebreaker, CWE staff, and curriculum writers conducted task analyses for the development of curriculum. The process for developing curricula is detailed in the graphic on page 38.

Model for Curriculum Development at Each Worksite


Establish Worksite Education Committees
Conduct Task Analysis and Plant Needs Assessment
Curriculum Development
Identify and Assess Workers
Workplace Literacy Classes and Supplemental Instructional Services
Reassess Worker/Plant Needs and Objectives
Revise Curriculum

Assessment Process

Upon entry into the program, participants in long term classes were given a series of appropriate tests. At the time of intake, all program participants articulated their job-related, educational, and personal goals. This information was incorporated into the registration form for each participant. This ILP section of the registration form remained in the participants' files, and it was reviewed when facilitators wrote progress notes on each student. Testing included the administration of the Oral BEST test, the Literacy BEST, and an holistic writing sample.

Class Implementation

Class implementation activities included:

1) **recruitment of participants;**
2) **retention of program participants;**
3) **adaptation of the curriculum to meet workers' needs;**
4) **collaborative development of lesson plans and materials;**
5) **formative evaluation.**

The program was committed to developing the most useful program model through collaborative planning with workers, facilitators, supervisors, and the union. The program model was most successful in plants (Suncast, Juno, Enro, Refractory Products, Amalgamated Bank of Chicago, Owens-Corning, and Phoenix) where management took an active role in implementing the program .

Participant Recognition

At the end of classes and workshops at the ABOC and in the Communications for the Workplace, the program held worker recognition ceremonies. Ceremonies took place at the companies, and workers received certificates of merit for their participation in the classes. In order to recognize workers for their extraordinary effort in attending and making progress in the classes, companies rewarded workers in a variety of ways. All companies provided a special meal or a cake for participating workers. Suncast framed workers' certificates. At

Libra Glove, workers received bonus checks for class attendance. At Owens-Corning, workers received personalized letters from the company president congratulating them on their participation in the program. Representatives from the company, ACTWU, and the program were present to award certificates, make congratulatory speeches, and encourage workers to re-enroll in classes. Participating workers made speeches about the classes, and, in some cases, workers presented workplace skits using Workplace ESL scenarios. The recognition ceremonies were instrumental in providing a mechanism to reward participants for their hard work and effort. They also served as recruitment and retention tools. At Owens and Phoenix, the Textile Division of ACTWU provided workers with pens and ACTWU tee shirts. The Communications for the Workplace workshops were held at ACTWU and ACTWU provided a special meal for the participants. Many workers in this workshop spoke about the professional and personal benefits of this workshop in very moving speeches.

Dissemination of Promising Program Practices

Dissemination activities of promising practices consisted of conference presentations by worker education program staff and media coverage of the program.

Conference Presentations

For dissemination and promotion purposes the program staff presented workshops focusing on promising practices in the workplace education field at local Adult Education Conferences.

The Illinois Resource Development Center's Conference, *Illinois Partnerships for Workforce Education*, held in Chicago on January 24 and 25, 1995, featured three presentations by program staff. Sarah Moran, Assistant Director, along with Stephanie Lilly, a business partner from the Amalgamated Bank of Chicago, Robert Worshill, a student and union steward at the Bank, the educational facilitator, Marcia LeRoy, and the curriculum developer from the Center For Workforce Education, Caren Van Slyke, presented *Successes and Challenges of a Workplace Partnership*. Sabrina Budasi Martin, Program Coordinator, also presented a workshop entitled, *Workplace Instruction for*

Specific Purposes, which highlighted the Basic Skills for Maintenance Workers class at Juno Lighting. Susan Womack, a teacher at Suncast, along with teacher aides, Sallie Wilson, and Laura Blake, presented a workshop entitled, *Games for the Workplace.*

At the annual Illinois TESOL/BE Conference held in Chicago on March 11, 1995, Sarah Moran and Sabrina Budasi Martin presented *Customizing ESL Curriculum and Teaching Activities for the Workplace.*

Margaret Boyter-Escalona, Program Director, and Paula Garcia, Lead Adult Education Facilitator presented *Promising Practices of Workplace Education Partnerships* at the Illinois Adult and Continuing Educators Association Annual Conference held in Arlington Heights, IL on March 30, 1995.

During the Fall of 1994 and throughout the Spring of 1995, Margaret Boyter-Escalona and Sabrina Budasi Martin participated in the Illinois Secretary of State's Pilot Project for the Workplace Education Training Institute, an Illinois initiative to train educational providers in the field of Workplace Literacy. Margaret participated in the planning committee, and Sabrina was a participant in the pilot training program.

Margaret Boyter-Escalona is a member of the planning committee for the National Workplace Literacy Conference which will be held in Wisconsin in 1996.

Recently, the program submitted four proposals for acceptance at the International TESOL Conference to be held in Chicago in March, 1996.

The program was featured at the International TESOL Conference in Long Beach, California in March, 1995, by Miriam Burt, of the Center for Applied Linguistics. Ms. Burt cited the WEP, along with six other programs throughout the U.S., as exemplary workplace ESL program models.

The program was also featured prominently in an article written by Dr. Joseph Penbera, Eaton Fellow and Chairman of the Pennant Group. Dr. Penbera interviewed Margaret Boyter-Escalona in August, 1994 and his article entitled *Workplace Literacy and Training: Overcoming the Reengineering Blindspot* was published in September, 1994.

On November 7, 1994, Margaret Boyter-Escalona presented testimony about the importance of Workplace Literacy and ESL Education at the Reauthorization of the Adult Education Hearings held by the U.S. Department of Education in Chicago, Illinois.

Media Coverage

The WEP has benefited from extensive media coverage. Media coverage during the course of the grant period included the following:

- **News clip and photograph of Juno union participant, Gerardo Ayala, in *The Daily Herald* on July 23, 1993**
- **Television coverage on the *America: Close-Up* segment of *The NBC Nightly News with Tom Brokaw* on August 3, 1993**
- **Article highlighting the Worker Education Program entitled " On Target: Building Up Basic Skills," by Robert L. Reid in *Technical Skills & Training* in February / March , 1994**
- **Article highlighting the Worker Education Program entitled "Beyond Workplace Literacy," by Ernesto Mora in *Labor Unity* in March / April, 1994**
- **Article highlighting the Worker Education Program entitled, "It's Never Too Late to Learn: Education Can Help Your Career and Your Life by Clayton S. Collins, in *Union Plus* in Fall, 1994**

VII. EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

External Evaluator

Dr. Joseph Fischer of National-Louis University was contracted as the external evaluator of the program. Due to his busy schedule Dr. Fischer worked with an assistant evaluator, Katherine Larson. In order to conduct their evaluation of the program, Dr. Fischer and Ms. Larson met with program staff on a regular basis, observed classes, interviewed participants, reviewed participant files, conducted data analysis, and wrote a final external evaluation report. The external evaluation design of the program is guided by three principal questions:

1.) To what extent has the program been effective in achieving the funded objectives?

2.) To what extent has the program been effective in meeting the purposes of the Workplace Literacy Program?

3.) To what extent has the program been effective in having an impact on targeted worker populations?

These questions were addressed through a multi-faceted evaluation process including Dr. Fischer's and Ms. Larson's evaluation process as well as the program's own formative evaluation.

In their roles as external evaluations, Dr.. Fischer and Ms. Larson provided the program with both formative and summative evaluation measures. Their evaluation of the program included quantitative and qualitative features. In order to assess the impact of the program, they compared pre- and post- standardized tests and conducted open ended interviews to measure the cognitive and affective domains of participants. The summative evaluation is included in the final report, and is based on their role as formative evaluators. In their roles as formative evaluators, Dr. Fischer and Ms. Larson provided the program with on-going recommendations for meeting program objectives and guidance about impacting the program's targeted population.

Formative Program Evaluation

The WEP conducted its own formative evaluation of the program on an on-going basis. Some measures of quantitative accomplishment of goals included standardized tests, customized work-based tests, holistic writing samples, attendance records, and program

evaluations from partner companies and the union documenting improvements in English communications, safety records, productivity, and enhanced worker performance. Evidence of qualitative evaluation documenting workers' growth and development included student evaluations of the program and progress reports containing individualized learning plans and anecdotal information about participants. Evaluation of progress toward goals and objectives was performed in a variety of ways on a continuous basis. ACTWU staff, Advisory Board members, CTC staff, WEP administrators and teachers, and participants themselves formally and informally evaluated the program on a regular basis.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The Worker Education Program successfully accomplished its originally funded objectives. The program provided basic workplace skills courses to union members, created customized curricula based on task analysis, created an exemplary governance structure involving all stakeholders, and significantly increased participants' workplace basic education skills through the provision of classes and workshops.

Workers increased their preparedness for continued and future employment and vastly improved their proficiency in English communication, reading, writing, math, and in other work-related basic skills areas. Because of their participation in the Worker Education Program, many limited English proficient union members were better able to face the challenges of working in an English-speaking work environment undergoing changes ranging from the introduction of new technology to shifting global competition.

In this workplace education program, workers' personal and professional educational needs were enhanced as well as union solidarity, management effectiveness, and the university's commitment to adult learners. The Worker Education Program "increased individuals' options as workers and as citizens" (Isserlis) in an innovative, interactive, and all encompassing manner.

As we approach the threshold of the 21st century, education will be the key to societal, economic, and personal development in the global marketplace. Programs like the Worker Education Program serve as a model and a beacon to enhance participants' skills for the workplace and for life.